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REMARKS

In the Action, the Abstract was objected to because the maximum length of 150 words has been exceeded. With this Amendment, the Abstract now satisfies the maximum limit for the number of words therein.

Also, claim 5 was objected because the term "common unique secret code" lacked a proper antecedent basis. However, the Applicants have adopted the Examiner's suggestion and amended claim 5 to depend from claim 4, which provides the antecedent basis for "common unique secret code."

As to the merits, the subject matter of dependent claims 17 and 20 was deemed allowable. In an effort to expedite issuance of this case, the subject matter of claims 16 and 17 have been included in new claim 21 with original claims 16 and 17 being cancelled. Also, the subject matter of claims 16 and 20 have been included in new claim 22 with original claim 20 being cancelled.

Also in the Action, claims 1, 4, 6, and 7 were rejected as anticipated by the Simon reference (U.S. Pat. No. 5,937,065). Claims 1-7 and 12-15 were rejected as anticipated by the Liden reference (U.S. Serial No. 09/802,934). Claims 1-7 and 12-16 were rejected as anticipated by the Kuenzi reference (U.S. Serial No. 10/363,938). In addition, claims 2, 3, 12, and 13 were rejected as obvious in view of the Simon reference in further view of the Liden reference. Claims 8-11 were rejected as obvious in view of the Simon reference in further view of the Alrabady reference (U.S. Pat. No. 6,658,328). Claim 16 was rejected as obvious in view the Simon reference in view of the Liden reference. Claims 18 and 19 were rejected as obvious in view of the Simon reference in view of the Liden reference and further in view of the Alrabady reference. However, with this Amendment, it is respectfully submitted that these rejections have been overcome.

None of the prior art, whether taken individually or in any permissible combination, discloses or suggests the inventive combination of features forming the subject matter of amended claims 1 and 6. In this regard, none of the cited references discloses the authentication protocol comprising the steps of comparing the key identification code (key ID) to a disabled identification code and restoring the key ID to an active status when the key ID and/or the key password is identical to the disabled

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identification code. The Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment as allowable subject matter from claim 17 has been incorporated into claims 1 and 6.

Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all of the claims remaining in the case, namely claims 1-15, 18, 19, and 21-24, are allowable. The Examiner is invited to telephone the Applicant's undersigned attorney at (248) 223-9500, if any unresolved matters remain.

Respectfully submitted,

ARTZ & ARTZ, P.C.



Vincent C. Ilagan
Reg. No. 53,053
28333 Telegraph Road, Ste. 250
Southfield, MI 48034

Attorney for Applicant(s)

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